

14 November 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Staff Meeting Minutes of 14 November 1979

The Director and Mr. Carlucci were attending an SCC meeting (Iran); Dirks chaired the meeting. []

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McMahon reported [] IOB, has requested the Board be briefed on covert action, 0930 Friday, 16 November. Re an earlier request for an update on sensitive intelligence activities, [] said he will ask for this briefing in private at another time. McMahon said he and Silver did not feel the Director or Mr. Carlucci need attend the CA briefing on Friday; he recommended this be handled by himself and Silver. []

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McMahon reported Bolivia's political situation is still in disorder; he said U.S. Embassy personnel who can be spared are being returned to the U.S. []

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Dirks asked if today's Associated Press report of a new, baseball-sized tumor in the Shah's neck is accurate. McMahon said he has no such information and went on to describe the Shah's medical condition, estimating the Shah will live about 6 months. []

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Hetu said he received a call from Cord Meyer who is forwarding his book manuscript (publisher unknown) for Agency review and asked that it be reviewed quickly and by "mature" officers. Silver raised the question of former employees who do not submit their material for review prior to publication--potential violation of their secrecy agreements. He asked that any information we have in this area be brought to his attention. He noted from his recent trip overseas that our people in the field are frustrated that the Agency cannot seem to do anything about the "Cord Meyers" of this world. Waller said he doesn't know details, but said former General Counsel Lapham had looked into this matter and, in a confrontation, Meyer adamantly refused to cooperate. []

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Hetu reported Newsweek's David Martin is searching for information toward a feature article on covert action--Martin believes the mood in the Congress and in the Administration is to lessen constraints on CA. Hetu said Martin is focusing also on the real meaning of the Hughes-Ryan Amendment and in this regard will probably contact Silver. []

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Hetu said he received a call yesterday from one of Presidential candidate Connally's speechwriters asking for Agency assistance which would have amounted to considerable research. Hetu said he brought this to the attention of Mr. Carlucci who provided guidance that, until nominated, Presidential candidates should be given the same assistance provided to all citizens, i.e., off-the-shelf items only. [] 25X1 25X1

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Clarke introduced Dick Kerr as the new Director, OCO, and announced other key personnel shifts:

- [] will replace Kerr as Deputy Director, Office of Political Analysis; 25X1
 - [] appointment to Chairman, COMIREX; 25X1
 - [] will transfer to DDS&T to be the new Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; 25X1
 - [] is the new Deputy Director, Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research; and 25X1
 - [] is Chief of NFAC's new Management, Planning, and Evaluation Staff--Clarke welcomed the assignment of [] (DDA) to head the Staff's Admin Group. [] 25X1 25X1 25X1
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Hitz reported the House/Senate conference on the Defense Appropriations will begin today, but its size indicates the intelligence portion is unlikely to be addressed before Thanksgiving. Hitz said Senator Stennis met with Representative Addabbo and they apparently have agreed to some paring of intelligence funds. Hitz reported also Chuck Snodgrass is sick and not available --reportedly a case of hepatitis. [] 25X1 25X1

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Hitz said Kriegsman and Koontz [] of A. D. Little, Inc., will arrive tomorrow afternoon to meet with the Director. In response to Hitz's query, Proctor said Bill Lackman will be their point of contact at RMS. []

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Hitz reported, re Representative Aspin's penchant for press releases involving intelligence, the HPSCI has adopted a new rule--the Committee will review and rule henceforth on what can be declassified for release to the public by any Committee member. He said the move was engineered by Representative Rose who is "fed up" with Aspin's actions. However, on the very day the rule was adopted, Hitz said Aspin violated the rule and must now face the Committee. He said the Committee may go to the House Speaker to ask that Aspin not be reappointed to the Committee. []

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Hitz called to Clarke's special attention a Cutler meeting held last evening--that 26 November is the earliest time that SALT II will get to floor debate; it may even slip a week. Hitz noted that gaining specific time agreement from Congressional members is elusive and that Senator Baker is pushing for TV coverage. Hitz said Senator Church will be the nominal floor manager, but Senator Byrd will handle all the work. Relatedly, Hitz noted the injection of politics into the SALT issue, i.e., Senator Goldwater's shift as a matter of record re verification--that the overall job of verification cannot be done. Hitz said this is probably the result of Senator Byrd's threat to Goldwater's position on the Taiwan issue. A brief discussion followed on Senator Glenn's position re SALT; Hitz said the White House is optimistic Glenn will vote in favor. []

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Wortman called attention to the need to set specific dates for office Christmas parties. There was no objection to his recommendation that these be held on 17 and 19 December. []

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[] said it is time to take a hard look at rising collection priorities. To do this he said CTS needs guidance from NFAC and the analytic community, noting that tradeoffs may be possible, i.e., a lessening of some collection priorities to gain more coverage, []

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Proctor said the NFIP package for 1981 has been finalized and on schedule. []

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Fallout Studied To Confirm Blast Near S. Africa

By Thomas O'Toole
Washington Post Staff Writer

Radioactive fallout has been detected in New Zealand, providing new indications that a secret atomic explosion took place in the atmosphere of the southern hemisphere within the past three months.

The fresh radioactive debris in rainwater is the first corroborating evidence that a nuclear explosion was triggered near South Africa on the night of Sept. 22, when a U.S. surveillance satellite spotted what was presumed to be the fireball of an atomic explosion.

"Radioactive fallout was the key missing element in what we thought originally was a clandestine nuclear test," a White House source said yesterday. "The fallout in New Zealand could well be that missing element."

The increase in radioactive fallout was reported yesterday by New Zealand's Institute of Nuclear Science at Gracefield, just north of the capital city of Wellington. The rise in fallout was described by Institute Director B. J. O'Brien as the kind one would expect from a small but recent atomic explosion in the atmosphere.

"What we see in our fallout here would be consistent with a nuclear explosion having a force equivalent of two to four kilotons," O'Brien said by telephone from Gracefield. "We've searched for other causes of this fallout but can find nothing else."

While South Africa has repeatedly denied being the source of whatever the satellite detected on Sept. 22, U.S. officials have suggested that South Africa triggered a test. So far, however, the State Department has said it has no confirming evidence that Pretoria was responsible for an atomic explosion.

O'Brien said yesterday that increases in radioactive fallout were measured in rainwater samples collected from Aug. 1 to Oct. 28, with short-lived radioisotopes such as barium-140, praseodymium-143 and yttrium-91, all of them fission products of nuclear explosions.

"We didn't see much of an increase," O'Brien said. "Just enough to suggest they came from a small nuclear test."

At the time that the State Department released the information that a U.S. satellite had seen what appeared to be a nuclear fireball, it estimated the size of the explosion as between two and four kilotons. This would be an extremely small atomic explosion, not more than one-fifth the size of the first atomic bomb dropped on Japan at the end of World War II.

The increase in New Zealand's fallout was measured for radioactive isotopes with half-lives no greater than 59 days, meaning that if they came from an atomic explosion, it was a recent one. A half life is the time it takes a radioactive isotope to lose half its radioactivity.

The half life is 12 days for barium-140, 13 days for praseodymium-140, and 59 days for yttrium-91.

"What we've seen couldn't have come from an old test," O'Brien said. "Whatever it is, it is a recent event."

Prevailing winds at the latitude of South Africa and New Zealand are west to east, meaning that radioactive debris near South Africa could be carried across the Indian Ocean toward Australia and New Zealand.

The U.S. surveillance satellite that spotted the suspected fireball Sept. 22 saw a double pulse of light in the atmosphere in a circle 3,000 miles wide over the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean south and east of South Africa.

The twin light pulse is the characteristic "signature" of an atomic explosion. It is the fireball that briefly disappears from view when the explosion's shock wave makes it opaque

from space, then reappears when the shock wave begins to dissipate.

The Vela satellites that look for nuclear explosions have seen 42 double spikes of light in the last 15 years, officials say. The first 41 were confirmed as atmospheric nuclear tests, exploded either by China or France. The 42nd event took place Sept. 22.

A curious piece of information about the suspected test also turned up yesterday in Washington. An aide of the Senate subcommittee on nuclear proliferation said the subcommittee asked the National Technical Information Service who had sought a computer search of the literature on nuclear explosions and the seismic detection of nuclear explosions.

"The answer we got back," the aide said, "was the defense and naval attaché of the Republic of South Africa."